

Message Text

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52

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 RSR-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 OMB-01 /079 W

----- 020222

R 261115 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1582

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DEPT PASS BAGHDAD

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, IR, IZ

SUBJ: IRANIAN AIRMEN DOWNED IN IRAQ RETURN TO TEHRAN

REF: TEHRAN 817

1. PRESS MARCH 25 ANNOUNCED RETURN EARLIER THAT DAY OF THE THREE IRANIAN HELICOPTER CREWMEN HELD IN IRAQ SINCE LAST JANUARY 10, WHEN THEY REPORTEDLY WERE FORCED TO LAND AFTER STRAYING ACROSS IRAQI BORDER (REFTEL). AIRMEN WERE MET AT THE MEHRABAD AIRPORT BY THEIR FAMILIES AND HIGH RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS. NEWSMEN WERE BARRED FROM INTERVIEWING THEM AND ALTHOUGH PROMINENT MEDIA COVERAGE GIVEN TO THEIR ARRIVAL, THERE WERE NO ADVANCE INDICATIONS OF THEIR RELEASE EITHER FROM BAGHDAD OR TEHRAN.

2. FOLLOWING THEIR RELEASE, ACCORDING NEWS MEDIA, THE CREW MEMBERS FLEW TO BEIRUT WHERE THEY BOARDED AN AIR FRAPQE FLIGHT FOR TEHRAN. THE PRESS STATED, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT THE HELICOPTER HAD BEEN RETURNED EARLIER TO IRAN. ACCORDING TO PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS THE THREE CREWMEN APPEAR TO BE IN GOOD HEALTH.
HELMS

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED BAGHDAD.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
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Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
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Errors: n/a
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30 JUN 2005

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